

Terms of Reference (TOR)
BASELINE STUDY FOR THE "EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH EDUCATION AND SKILLS (RAJO KAABA)" PROJECT IN GALMUDUG STATE, SOMALIA

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Sectoral and Institutional Context

Education is regarded as a cornerstone of state rebuilding, as the country aims to lay the groundwork for economic growth and social development by investing in its population. The significance of education in state development is emphasized in the National Development Plan and further articulated in the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2022-2026. Though not fully codified in law, the Federal Government's Ministry of Education, Culture, and Higher Education (MoECHE) is responsible for the overall guidance and administration of education in the country, while Somalia's Federal Member States (FMS) are responsible for policy implementation and service delivery, in their respective states.

Girls' and Women's Education in Somalia

Women's basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy, are low both in absolute terms and relative to men in Somalia. Nationwide, an estimated 56 percent of women of age 15 years or older cannot read compared to 41 percent of men. In recent years, Somalia has made progress in getting more girls in school: the share of women and girls from age of 10 to 19 years without any formal education is half that of women over age 35. This gradual improvement in access to basic education is a substantial achievement against a backdrop of crisis. Despite this progress, more than 40 percent of girls remain excluded even in the youngest cohort. While women's education attainment and literacy are lower than men's across the board, there are also unequal outcomes across different groups of women: approximately 72 percent of women of age 25 years or older, who live in rural areas, have never attended formal schooling, compared to 59 percent in urban areas. For women who are nomads or in internally displaced person (IDP) settlements, this percentage reaches 83 percent. Though the national literacy rate for women is 44 percent, for rural women it is 35 percent, and among nomadic women it is 10 percent.

1.2 The Rajo Kaaba Project

The "Empowering Women through Education and Skills (Rajo Kaaba)" project is a Government of Somalia initiative supporting adolescent girls and women to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, cross-cutting socioemotional and life skills, and basic vocational skills to improve their livelihoods. Given the low levels of literacy and numeracy in the target population, the project focuses on improving these foundational skills and basic livelihood skills, which are prerequisites to higher-level employment or self-employment skills in specific sectors. Rajo Kaaba is implemented in Galmudug state by Windle International Somalia (WISOM) with overall coordination of the Federal Government of Somalia's Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE) and the Galmudug State Ministry of Education.

1.3 Project Goal and Objectives

Overall Goal: To improve the foundational skills and vocational competencies among women and men (aged between 15-35 years) in Somalia and specifically in Galmudug State, requisite for them to learn, work and actively participate in social and economic life.

Specific Objectives:

The project is structured around three interconnected outcome areas:

- Outcome 1: Improved basic numeracy and literacy among 4,550 women aged 15-35 years enrolled in the program.
- Outcome 2: Acquisition of market-relevant vocational skills for improved access to employment, self-employment or income generating opportunities among 1450 women and 1000 men aged between 15-35 years enrolled in the program.
- Outcome 3: Strengthened crosscutting socio-emotional and life skills amongst 7000 beneficiaries (6000 women and 1000 men aged 15-35 years) enrolled in the program.

1.4 Target Population and Geographic Scope

The project targets a cumulative 7,000 direct beneficiaries in Galmudug State broken down as follows:

- Group 1- 4,550 women enrolled in literacy and numeracy classes (with compulsory life-skills*).
- Group 2- 2,450 beneficiaries (1450 women and 1000 men) enrolled in vocational skills training (with compulsory life-skills*).

**Compulsory lifeskills delivered to both groups comprise Digital Skills, Financial Literacy, Reproductive Health and Hygiene, Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change.*

Geographic Coverage: **Adado, Abudwak, Galkacyo, Dhusamareb and Guriceel** districts of the Galmudug state.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE BASELINE STUDY

2.1 Overall Objective

To collect comprehensive, reliable, and disaggregated baseline data on the three outcome areas, establishing quantifiable reference points against which future progress will be measured, with particular focus on literacy and numeracy proficiency, life skills knowledge and application, vocational skills competencies, and employment and livelihood outcomes.

2.2 Specific Objectives

Objective 1: Profile identified beneficiaries Literacy and Numeracy levels prior to program implementation.

- Oversee the administration of an Early Grade Reading Assessment(EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment(EGMA) tool to inform learner placement and progress tracking in the literacy and numeracy classes (EGRA and EGMA Tool to be provided by MOECHE. Consultant role here involves training of enumerators retained by the project on placement tool administration, collation of the raw data, analysis and reporting on learner-level data to inform placement and progress tracking at midline and endline).

Objective 2: Establish Pre-Intervention Benchmarks for Life Skills Knowledge and Practice

- Establish pre-intervention reference data on the identified beneficiaries existing knowledge and self-reported practice across the four mandatory life skills domains: Digital skills, Financial literacy, Reproductive Health and Hygiene, environmental sustainability and climate change

Objective 3: Assess Trainees Vocational Skills Profile and Labour Market Context

- Assess identified trainees' skill level in selected trades, aspirations and expectations in the vocational skills component of the program.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The baseline study for the Rajo Kaaba project will be conducted across all target districts in Galmudug State: Adado, Abudwak, Galkacyo, Dhusamareb and Guriceel. Data collection will encompass urban, peri-urban, rural, IDP settlement, and nomadic/pastoralist communities within these districts to ensure effective reach of the targeted beneficiaries. The project will provide the consultant with the MOECHE approved EGRA and EGMA placement Tool requisite for the literacy and numeracy assessment envisaged under specific objective 1. The consultant will be responsible for the oversight of all data collection, collation, analysis and reporting on the three specific objectives provided for under section 2.2 of this TOR.

4. DELIVERABLES

The consultant will be responsible for delivering the following outputs within the agreed timeframe, to a professional standard acceptable to Windle. All deliverables must be submitted in English, with professional quality writing, proper referencing, and adherence to Windle's guidelines. Electronic copies of all materials, including raw and clean datasets, must be provided in appropriate formats:

4.1 Inception Report

The selected consultant shall submit an inception report for approval by Windle prior to commencing the baseline study. The inception report shall include the following details:

- A review of the MOECHE approved EGRA and EGMA placement tool and a program on its administration including training of project retained enumerators, data collection, collation, analysis and reporting.
- Comprehensive methodology for specific objectives 2 and 3 including data collection methods, and analytical and reporting framework.
- Complete data collection tools as appropriate.
- Detailed work plan and timeline with clear milestones.
- Team composition with roles and responsibilities.
- Quality assurance and ethical protocols, including data protection measures.
- Risk assessment and mitigation strategies for field operations across all target districts.

The consultant will incorporate feedback received from Windle and secure formal approval before commencing field data collection.

4.2 Baseline Report

The baseline study report, both draft and final. The report must contain an executive summary addressing the three objective areas of the study.

4.2.1 Draft Baseline Report

The consultant will prepare a draft baseline report, followed by a debrief/validation meeting with WISOM, government counterparts, and key stakeholders, where the consultant will present key findings. The final draft shall then be submitted incorporating feedback from the debriefing.

4.2.2 Final Baseline Report

The final report shall be submitted incorporating all feedback from Windle, MOECHE and relevant stakeholders provided during the debrief meeting. The final report will require formal written approval from Windle before final payment is released and any external dissemination takes place.

Over and above the detailed final report, the consultant will prepare a PowerPoint presentation summarizing key findings and recommendations and conduct at least one presentation session for Windle, government counterparts, and broader stakeholders including relevant district authorities. The consultant will also develop appropriate visual aids infographics, charts, and summary tables to effectively communicate baseline findings to both technical and non-technical audiences.

4.3 Datasets and Protection

Concurrently with the final baseline report, the consultant will submit raw and cleaned quantitative datasets (in agreed formats, a comprehensive data dictionary/codebook for all variables, and organized qualitative materials). All files will be clearly structured in a logical folder system and submitted to Windle through secure file transfer in line with the data ownership and protection provisions of this Terms of Reference.

5. TIMELINE

The baseline study will be conducted over a 30-day period following contract signing, with the following tentative timeline and activities breakdown envisaged:

Activity	Duration (days)
Desk review, preparation of inception report, and development of data collection tools	3
Enumerator training and field-testing of tools	2
Field data collection across all target districts	10
Data cleaning, processing, and analysis	4
Draft baseline report writing	2
Submission of draft report and debrief/validation workshop	2
Incorporation of feedback and finalization of baseline report	3

Final report and datasets submission	4
Total Number of days	30

6. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Minimum 5 years of experience leading baseline studies or similar research assignments for education and especially on Literacy and Numeracy, technical and vocational skills development, or women's empowerment projects in fragile or conflict-affected contexts.
- Demonstrated expertise in mixed-methods research design, quantitative and qualitative data collection including EGRA/EGMA, statistical analysis, and gender-disaggregated data interpretation.
- Familiarity with non-formal education, TVET, and second-chance education programming, alongside an understanding of livelihood and economic empowerment interventions for women and youth.
- Strong knowledge of Somalia's regional dynamics, cultural sensitivities, and security considerations.
- Demonstrated ability to produce high-quality, concise analytical reports with clear findings and actionable programmatic recommendations.
- Commitment to ethical research practices, do-no-harm principles, and inclusive, participatory approaches in fragile contexts.
- Prior experience conducting studies for World Bank IDA, or other international donor-funded projects in Somalia or East Africa is a plus.

7. APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested individual consultants or consulting firms should submit the following documents:

- **Technical Proposal:** Demonstrating understanding of the ToR, proposed methodology, work plan, and team composition including number of enumerators required for the envisaged data collection within the timeline provided.
- **Financial Proposal:** A detailed budget breakdown covering all costs associated with the assignment. *(Enumerator costs should not be included in the financial proposal. Windle will recruit and provide all field enumerators. The consultant is responsible for developing relevant data collection tools, delivering enumerator training, and supervising field data collection, collation, analysis and reporting.)*
- CVs and References: Consultant CV/s, along with references and two examples of similar past assignments.

Qualified Individual consultant/Firm are requested to submit both technical and financial proposals, including all required CV and References as one document to infosom@windle.org

Applications should be clearly marked: **Rajo Kaaba Baseline Study — Technical and Financial Proposal** on the email Subject. The submission deadline is at 16:00pm 15th June 2026.